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ABSTRACT

This illustrated booklet describes the scope and objectives of state-sponsored library media improvement programs in Oklahoma which are geared to aid school library programs at the elementary level. Personnel, facilities, materials, equipment, and services are briefly discussed, and a map of project sites is provided. (FM)

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ED206327

# Putting A Plus In School Curriculum with Library Media Improvement Programs

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Oklahoma State Department of Education
Leslie Fisher, State Superintendent

# Foreword

From the day when one of our primitive ancestors learned to make a symbol stand for a word, his descendants have been gathering those symbols into more and more complex forms and storing them in various ways so that the mistakes of the past might be avoided in the future, and so that new knowledge could be built upon the old.

What this means is that stored knowledge, made easily accessible to all who seek answers to their questions, must be an integral part of our educational system. To be worthwhile, it cannot be an add-on. We must know where the knowledge is and how to get at it. And because of the incredible amount of knowledge and information available to us today, we must make use of those with special talents to help us find that information. We call them librarians, or media specialists.

They are important to our past, our present and our future. Library Media Improvement is essential, as an ongoing and integrated part of our school processes. The value of this program is evidenced in the level of funding support given to it by the Legislature. The Library and Learning Resource staff here at the Oklahoma State Department of Education stand ready to help you plan and build a useful resource center for the young minds in your charge. We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fisher

Leslie Fisher
State Superintendent

# Introduction

An exciting library program is creating enthusiasm for learning wherever it goes. Through funding from the State Legislature, Oklahoma Library Media Improvement Programs are helping teachers of over 26,000 students expand their teaching beyond the narrow confines of one textbook.

Interest in this relatively new program is high. As parents, teachers and administrators learn of the program's success in other schools, hundreds of requests for information and inservice are received by the Library Resources Section of the State Department of Education.

Following a survey conducted by the Education Department, it was learned that most school library programs at the elementary level were in great need of improvement and development. As a result of this research, Library Media Improvement grants are awarded to elementary schools, K-8, or to small schools serving a K-12 population in one facility.

The allocation of LMI grants is formula based and ranges from $5,000 to $20,000. Schools receiving grants may apply for three consecutive years at full funding. Starting with the fourth year, the allocation will continue at a $5,000 maintenance level.

The Oklahoma State Board of Education has established basic criteria for LMI grants. Each project director must be a certified school media specialist and must serve in that school at least half time. The media collection must be centralized and the district must be willing to continue to appropriate local monies for books and materials as recommended in the *Annual Bulletin for Elementary and Secondary Schools.* The local school district must also assume any building, remodeling or furnishing costs. Those schools awarded grants may put the money into any of the following areas:

- Personnel salaries (professional and/or clerical)
- Books (including catalog card kits and processing)
- Audio-visual materials (filmstrips, tapes, records, etc.)
- Equipment (projectors, tape recorders, video, etc.)

Each grant applicant must supply the State Department of Education with a needs assessment, procedures for evaluation and long-range plans for the library media center in terms of personnel, facility, materials and equipment, and services. The application is then reviewed and evaluated by a committee.

# Update

The State Legislature has recognized that school libraries play a key role in developing and assisting a school's curriculum. The legislature responded by appropriating $300,000 in 1978-79 for developing or improving school media programs. This appropriation enabled the SDE to award grants to 20 project schools.

Due to tremendous response, the following year (1979-80) the appropriation was more than doubled. With the $665,000 appropriation, 19 projects were continued and 33 new ones were developed. In addition to response for information concerning LMI grants, many school districts requested inservice education to strengthen their library media programs.

As a result of these inservice requests, two library media training specialists developed a program focused on improving awareness, efficient planning and proper utilization of library media resources. Out of 180 requests for this inservice, 95 schools received the in-depth, on-campus programs. A total of 1,959 administrators, teachers and librarians participated. The success of the program is evident by the number of requests for inservice and consultation that the Library Resources Section receives daily.

For the 1980-81 school year the State Legislature again increased funding for Library Media Improvement projects to one million dollars. Even with this substantial increase, many requests had to be denied. Out of 119 applications, 52 projects were continued and 24 new ones established.

# Personnel

Picture a library with rows upon rows of books lining the shelves. Add the appropriate library furniture, some audio-visual equipment and materials. Presto, a library media center! But wait . . . This picture is missing a key ingredient - the library media specialist.

Before the media center can really come to life, it must be staffed by a certified media specialist. Until then it is only a storehouse for books and materials.

In order for the media specialist to have the necessary time to work with teachers and students in various curriculum areas, many project schools see the importance of providing clerical adult aides. Also, programs staffed by a full-time specialist are able to provide more and varied services to the entire school.

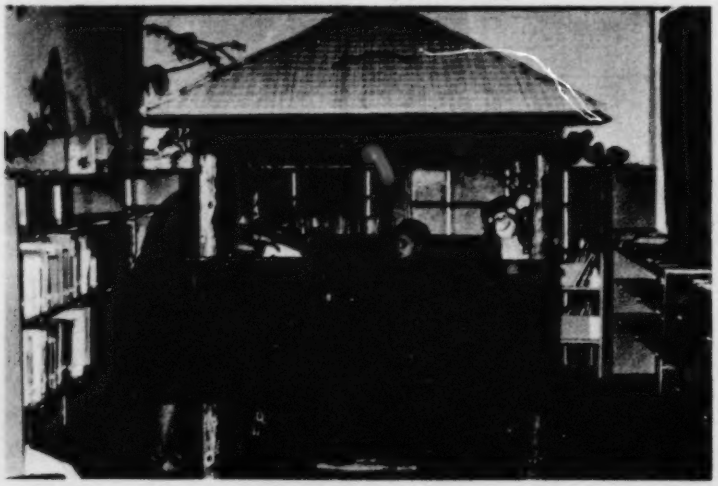
In a media center the librarian is, first of all, a teacher who is a specialist in resources relating to the entire curriculum. Secondly, that person teaches the appreciation of literature.

# Facilities

A centralized facility for the collection of resources is an important component of a library media program. In the 76 project schools this facility may vary from a converted classroom to a modern, spacious media center.

A good program can be developed practically anywhere. Some were started in trailers or portable buildings. Others began in remodeled auditoriums or cafeterias. Even the end of a hallway was one humble beginning. Many media centers have begun in a small facility only to grow and expand as the interest increases.

A school beginning a media center need not invest in expensive furnishings. Some schools have built attractive centers utilizing the talents in the local community. Colorful murals and graphics have been painted on the center's walls and in hallways leading to it. People with carpentry ability have been enlisted to build bookshelves, study carrels, reading nooks and work areas for the center. A little extra time and paint can turn a ho-hum center into one with personality.



# Materials & Equipment

As a result of the Library Media Improvement grant, project schools are able to offer more resources to both teachers and students. Not only has the funding enabled more materials to be purchased, but many schools for the first time centralized their resources. It was often a surprise to the schools to learn the total amount already owned. Centralization enables greater utilization of existing resources.

After the collection is organized and evaluated, the next professional duty is the selection of quality materials. The media specialist is trained to use library reviewing sources in order to get the best materials for the school's curriculum. A bargain book is no bargain if it sits on the shelf because it is not appropriate.

When a media center offers a variety of print and nonprint materials tailored to the school's program, it marks the beginning of a total media center concept.

# Services

No longer do project schools view their media centers as just "a place to check out books." A wide variety of activities are taking place in the media center and overflowing into the classrooms. Students are developing independent research skills and teachers are integrating library media resources into their classroom activities.

Learning can and should be an exciting experience. These activities, under the direction of a media specialist, help maintain the children's enthusiasm for education. Because the media center has materials on many levels, it is the perfect vehicle for all students, whether they are gifted and talented or require special assistance.

Services to students can include such things as booktalks, storyhours and lessons in researching. Many students are now actively involved in producing

their own media and correlating it to a topic being discussed in the classroom.

The faculty is offered a wide variety of services by the project media specialists. They serve as consultants on resources for classroom use, develop bibliographies, provide in-services on better utilization of materials and equipment, and help plan and present special programs.

The LMI projects offer a program of services to the total school population and are basic to the educational operation. No longer are these librarians content with the "backroom operations" of technical services and cataloging. The number one priority of the project media specialist is SERVICE.

Because a media program must constantly assess itself, an evaluation should be an ongoing, continuous activity. Students and teachers should not only inform the media specialist of the program's success but should give suggestions for improvement or additional services.

Some formal evaluations consist of using standardized tests or using a series of pre and post-tests of library skills. The projects using these methods all reported a substantial increase in the students' reference skills.

Informal evaluation of both students and teachers have been conducted. Some schools have even sent questionnaires to parents and discovered the positive effects of the media program often reaches the home.

The Library Resources Section of the State Department of Education has a staff of professional media specialists willing to assist schools interested in applying for the library grants or requiring technical assistance.

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# Project Sites – 1980-81

1. **Adair** - Bell
2. Stilwell
3. Watts
4. Westville
5. **Atoka** - Atoka
6. **Bryan** - Durant
7. **Carter** - Ardmore
8. Lone Grove
9. Plainview
10. **Cherokee** - Keys
11. **Cleveland** - Moore (Central)
12. Moore (Kelley)
13. Noble
14. Norman (Lincoln)
15. Norman (Madison)
16. Norman (Monroe)
17. **Cotton** - Walters
18. **Creek** - Bristow
19. Drumright
20. Sapulpa (Lone Star)
21. Sapulpa
22. **Custer** - Clinton
23. Weatherford
24. **Delaware** - Salina (Kenwood)
25. Oaks
26. **Dewey** - Vici
27. **Garfield** - Drummond
28. Enid (Monroe)
29. Enid (McKinley)
30. **Grady** - Tuttle
31. **Harmon** - Hollis
32. **Haskell** - Stigler
33. **Kay** - Ponca City
34. **LeFlore** - Panama
35. Poccla
36. **Lincoln** - Chandler
37. **Mayes** - Pryor (Jefferson)
38. Pryor (Roosevelt)
39. **McClain** - Dibble
40. Purcell
41. **McIntosh** - Checotah (Elementary)
42. Checotah (Longfellow)
43. **Muskogee** - Haskell
44. **Muskogee** - Muskogee (Pershing/ Franklin)
45. Muskogee (Whittier)
46. **Nowata** - Wann
47. **Oklahoma** - Edmond
48. Harrah
49. Oklahoma City (P.C. Overholser)
50. Oklahoma City (P.C. Tulakes)
51. Oklahoma City (P.C. Windsor Hills)
52. **Osage** - Tulsa (Academy Central)
53. **Ottawa** - Commerce
54. Miami
55. **Pawnee** - Cleveland
56. **Payne** - Stillwater (Sangre Rd)
57. Stillwater (Westwood)
58. **Pittsburg** - Hartshorne

(Pittsburg)
59. McAlester
60. **Pottawatomie** - N. Rock Creek
61. **Rogers** - Claremore
62. Inola
63. **Sequoyah** - Muldrow (Liberty)
64. Muldrow
65. Sallisaw (Liberty)
66. Sallisaw (East Side Middle)
67. Vian
68. **Tillman** - Frederick
69. **Tulsa** - Broken Arrow (Northeast)
70. Broken Arrow (Southside)
71. Broken Arrow (Vandever)
72. Jenks
73. Tulsa
74. Tulsa (Bixby)
75. **Wagoner** - Coweta
76. Wagoner